



## STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720  
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Idaho State Department of Education  
September 24, 2013  
[www.sde.idaho.gov](http://www.sde.idaho.gov)

Media contact:  
Melissa McGrath  
(208) 332-6818  
[mrmcgrath@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:mrmcgrath@sde.idaho.gov)

# TWO IDAHO SCHOOLS EARN NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON AWARD FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

BOISE – Two Idaho schools have been named among the most prestigious in the nation for academic achievement, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced today.

Gate City Elementary School in Pocatello and Sugar-Salem High School in Sugar City were among 286 schools across the country named 2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools. The Idaho State Department of Education nominated these schools for the award based on their student achievement results.

“These two schools serve as an example to their peers and their communities both in Idaho and across the country. I applaud their teachers, leaders, students, and parents for the success they have demonstrated now and in recent years,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said.

Both schools also ranked as high-performing in Idaho’s Five-Star Rating System, which uses multiple measures to evaluate a school’s academic performance. Gate City Elementary School is a Five-Star School, and Sugar-Salem High School is a Four-Star School.

Since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education’s National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has recognized great American public and non-public elementary, middle, and high schools. The program recognizes schools where students perform at very high levels or where significant improvements are being made in students’ levels of academic achievement.

National Blue Ribbon Schools will be honored this year at a recognition ceremony in Washington, D.C. in October. Here are highlights of each school and why they received the prestigious National Blue Ribbon School award:

**Gate City Elementary School in Pocatello** is recognized as an Exemplary High-Performing School for its continued high performance. At Gate City Elementary, 99-100 percent of students are proficient in reading in grades 3-6, and 94-99 percent of students are proficient in mathematics in grades 3-6.

“We are very proud of the exemplary high performance of the students and staff at Gate City Elementary and are honored with the selection of this school for a National Blue Ribbon Award,” said Mary Vagner, Superintendent of the Pocatello/Chubbuck School District.

**Sugar-Salem High School in Sugar City** is recognized as an Exemplary Improving School for the academic growth students have made in recent years. Student proficiency has increased by 14 percent in reading and by 11 percent in mathematics over the past five years.

“Sugar-Salem High School is honored to be selected as a National Blue Ribbon School. This award is a reflection of the commitment for excellence on the part of the students, teachers, parents, and community of Sugar-Salem School District. We see this, not as a capstone, but a foundation for the future of education in our community,” said Jared Jenks, Principal of Sugar-Salem High School.

#####

---

Office Location  
650 West State Street

Telephone  
208-332-6800

Speech/Hearing Impaired  
1-800-377-3529

Fax  
208-334-2228

---